Measures against the spread of hazardous Weeds of foreign origin

*147. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the spread of Parthenium and Lantana weeds in northern parts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to uproot these foreign weeds from the country;

(c) whether Government propose to take precautionary measures against the spread of hazardous and killer weeds/shrubs of foreign origin in the country; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have taken the following steps to control Parthenium and Lantana weeds:—

1. *Parthenium*

(i) Recommended measures to control the weed are as under:—

—Physical removal of weed soon after the on-set of monsoon

— Foliar spray of 15 per cent common salt solution, spray of 2,4-D on young plants and Paraquat on matured plants.

— Blanket spray of Paraquat and Diuron/Atrazine to check the emergence of weed.

— Mobilisation of community efforts.

(ii) Publicity through Akashvani and Doordarshan for weed control measures and distribution of literature on control of weed to States.

(iii) Intensification of research efforts for evolving better weed management practices.

2. *Lantana*

The recommendations for control of Lantana weed are as under: -

(i) Cutting of Lantana bushes 5 to 7.5 cm above ground level in September.

(ii) Spraying of 1 per cent Glyphosate solution in October and November on re-generated foliage.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is making efforts to develop biological measures to control Lantana weed. Larvae of some insects including a few butter flies, seed fly and Lantana bug have been identified to be host specific parasites to this weed. Further reasearch on parasites is continuing.

(c) and (d) Weeds of foreign origin are mostly introduced in the country through the bulk import of foodgrains. Therefore, importation of foodgrains/seeds has been brought under the purview of the Plants, Fruits and Seeds (Regulation of Import into India) Order 1984/1989. As such, Plant Quarantine regulations are now imposed to ward off the entry of exotic weeds through such imports

Agreements Forced by news paper employers for foregoing benefits of Bachawat Award

*148. SHRI KAPIL VERMA

SHRIMATI SATYA BAHIN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the newspaper employers are forcing their employees to sign agreements for foregoing the full benefits of the Bachawat Wage Board recommendations; if so, what action Government propose to take to protect the workers' interests; and

(b) what is the legal status of such agreements made under duress, depriving the workers of their dues under notification issued by Government, if these are illegal, what action is being taken to declare them void?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) A few representations nave been received from Newspaper employees that they are being forced to sign agreements for foregoing the full benefits of Bachawat Wage Board recommendations. These representations have been sent to the respective State Governments for appropriate action.

According to section 13 of the working Journalists and Qther Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisons Act 1955 every working journalist is entitled to be paid by the employer, wages which shall in no case be less than the wages specified in Central Government order. This entitlement to wages continues to be protected under section 16(1) of the Act notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith, contained in any agreement or contract of service.

3. In a set of writ petitions pending consideration in the Supreme Court, in an interim order dated January 30, 1990, the Hon'ble Court has *inter-alia* made the following observations:—

> "We hope and trust that the employees with whom settlement has been reached, as alleged, would await, the final decision of the court and not disturb the settlement. We leave the question of interest to be dealt with later".

Problem of safety in Mines

*149. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the National Council of Mines Safety Staff Co-ordination Union, Dhanbad has approached Government regarding safety in Mines; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, and whether it is also a fact that some Members of Parliament have also approached Government in this regard and if so, how Government propose to overcome the problems of safety of the Mines?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) The National Council for Safety in Mines (NCSM) Staff Coordination Union, Dhanbad has represented against an earlier decision of the Government to wind up the National Council for Safety in Mines. This decision had been taken as the Council was unable to make itself effective owing to lack of resources. It was felt that the activities for promotion of safety in the organised sector be handled by the management of the mines concerned while the Directorate General of Mines Safety could take up the activities for the unorganised sector in the mines. Several representations including those from Members of Parliament have been received by the Government against the winding up of the Council and the matter is under review.

The Mines Act, 1952 and and the rules and regulations framed thereunder provide *inter-alia* requirements to ensure safety, health and welfare of workers and these are required to be complied with by the management concerned. According to Mines Act, the Director General of Mines Safety, (DGMS) and his officers should inspect the mines periodically and take action as appropriate against persons found responsible for violation of the provisions. DGMS also issues guidelines, from time to time, as may be called for, to supplement such provisions.

Extension of support price to Horticultural Crops

*150. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently taken any decision to extend price support to horticultural crops; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?